



THE HOOT

WATCHING
MEDIA IN THE
SUBCONTINENT

Search Site

GO

the more the
media matters
the more we
must track
what it does

HOME	COMMUNITY MEDIA	MEDIA BUSINESS	MEDIA BOOKS & RESEARCH	COLUMNS	ONLINE MEDIA	NEIGHBOURS	RESOURCES ▼	ISSUES IN MEDIA ▼
------	-----------------	----------------	------------------------	---------	--------------	------------	-------------	-------------------

Resource id #53

Search Result Detail

Spin doctoring In Andhra Pradesh

Monitoring of two newspapers -- Eenadu and Sakshi -- provides documentation of how single-mindedly the Congress party is using its chief minister's family newspaper to tarnish the TDP's Naidu. C S H N MURTHY details his findings. CSHN Murthy

Posted Wednesday, Jun 11 13:55:08, 2008

An analysis of the stories published in *Sakshi* over 30 days clearly showed that the paper indulged in spin doctoring. Obviously in terms of Eric Louw's interpretation DrYSR and his people such as his politicians-turned business partners and some of the cabinet ministers are the *insiders* of *Sakshi* who can indulge Congress through the *Sakshi* paper. Though this is clearly the highest form of spin doctoring that the State is witnessing as described by Eric Louw one can certainly say that spin-doctoring existed even before in a different way. Especially *Eenadu* has the reputation of having indulged in spin doctoring between 1983-1995. For that matter even *Indian Express* and *The Hindu* had indulged in spin doctoring in the post independent era.

According to Louw there are two types of journalist-politician relationships: one is a *pre-watch dog* or *partisan journalism* wherein media supports a particular political party or ideology. *Partisan journalists* worked collaboratively with those politicians they supported to help promote their causes (Louw 62: 2005). *Pre-watch dog journalism* encodes the practice of journalists who are outside the establishment and who position themselves as *committed* advocates of changing their political system, says Louw. At the same time Louw points out that once these journalists become part of liberal political system as *insiders* their self-definitions necessarily shift as they eschew partisanship. *Non-partisan journalists* according to Louw can adopt one of the three insider relationships to the liberal political systems 1. *Journalists as loyal opposition or watchdog* 2. *The lapdog* where journalists cooperate with politicians and 3. *Spectacle Journalism* which enables the politicians to undermine the opposition.

The second type of the journalist-politician relationship is *Fourth Estate Journalism* as envisaged by Delane which stipulates that journalists are part of liberal process and a part of policy formulation. They need not be adversarial though their stories can lead to conflict between the government and the media. Quite opposed to *Fourth Estate Journalism* is *muckraking journalism* or *yellow journalism* developed by Joseph Pulitzer and Randolph Hearst towards the end of 19th century.

Both *Eenadu* ((1983-95) and *Indian Express* (1960-77) tried to be part of *Fourth Estate Journalism* and the *Hindu* played its critical role during *Bofors scam* expose in the post 1989-1991.

During the entry of NTR in to Andhra Pradesh politics it was Ramoji Rao who became part of NTR's political strategies and policies and enabled him to spring to power in a short of span of 9 months. NTR advocated through *Eenadu* for the total prohibition of liquor provision of rice to the poor at rupees 2, mid-day meal for the students studying in government primary schools etc. *Eenadu*'s liquor prohibition campaign during this time is a memorable media campaign adhered to social cause. It ran full-length success stories leading to total prohibition in the State. However, the same *Eenadu* reversed its ideology and supported Chandrababu when the latter lifted the liquor prohibition in the aftermath of NTR losing power to Chandrababu due to Lakshmi Parvathi issue. Media circles were agog with the grapevine that *Eenadu* took active part in the events leading to revolt against NTR on the Lakshmi Parvathi issue and it was Ramoji's deliberate support that enabled Chandrababu consolidate the rebel MLAs against NTR at Hotel Viceroy.

So ran the articles in *Indian Express* during 1975-77 against Indira Gandhi which necessitated

MEDIA WATCH BRIEF

Worse than rioting

If you are still unclear about the draconian nature of Sec 66 (a) of the IT Act, here's something that'll help: Palghar police charged ten people with rioting, unlawful assembly, endangering life or personal safety of others, mischief and house-trespass (Secs 143, 147, 336, 427, 451 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) respectively) for vandalizing Dr Dhada's hospital. Punishment for all this: three months to two years. But the young women arrested under section 66 (a), IT Act, and Sec 505 (2) of the IPC for their Facebook posts can get up to three years! Clearly, riotous acts are less dangerous than speaking out!

Contrite Katju

When Press Council Chairman Markendeya Katju questioned the intellectual calibre of media persons, it gave the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) the perfect excuse to boycott his meetings. Oddly, the normally combative Press Council chairman expressed regrets in a letter dated 21.09.2012. Now, the INS has magnanimously accepted the regrets, a press release from the society said. Perhaps Katju will rein in his criticism of media houses now, more the pity!

Usage, please

Ladies and gentlemen of the media please note: laid to rest .. [more>>](#)

He loved the media?

.. [more>>](#)

.....[MORE BRIEFS](#)

SUPPORT THE HOOT

FOLLOW US



MEDIA JOB OF THE WEEK

New Business Age Pvt. Ltd in Nepal is hiring a Copy Editor

New Business Age Pvt. Ltd., the pioneer of Economic Journalism in Nepal has been publishing New Business Age (monthly business magazine in English), Aarthik Abh

Opening at The Statesman

The Statesman needs correspondents at

clamping of emergency by Indira Gandhi in 1975 It was Goenka's personal agenda to dethrone Indira which he orchestrated very meticulously by roping in such famous personalities like Jaya Prakash Narayan Moraji and Neelam Sajeewa Reddy etc In fact it was *Indian Express* which brought out a number of scandals against Indira and her cabinet colleagues The infamous sensational *Nagarwala* case the *sugar license scandal* involving LN Mishra the *Kissa Kursika* case against VC Shukla the *Indira Pratibha Pratisthan cement scandal* case against AR Antulay the *Kuo oil deal etc* were some of the prominent stories which *Indian Express* had put out in the name of *watchdog journalism* This is also called as *adversarial watchdogism* a variety of *watchdogism* described above (Louw: 64:2005)

It is this watchdogism, which is not in the comprehension of Dr YS Rajasekhar Reddy. He lacked in precise appreciation of the interaction that media and politicians play in the liberal democracies Schultz (1998:29) notes in the years since Delane that the media have through successful lobbying and marketing largely naturalized this Fourth Estate Journalistic vision within liberal democracies Consequently liberal journalists now adhere to the following self-definitions of their role writes Eric Louw The self-definitions enlisted by Louw are:

To be necessarily critical of politicians (adversarial)
To champion citizen rights against the abuse of state power
To provide a plat form for debate

Ramaji, Ramnath Goenka and N Ram were best examples of the practitioners of the above-mentioned media-political processes.

However as soon as YSR became the Chief Minister, he began attacking both *Eenadu* and *Andhra Jyothi*. He even went on record stating that these two newspapers are basically anti-congress. The author discussed the issues of confrontation between Congress and Media in his earlier article published in the Hoot (Murthy C.S.H.N. : *Cong vs Media The Hoot: Oct 2007*). Dr YSR's efforts to bring in *Sakshi* was in effect to counter these two news papers though entire media together with his one time political allies such as CPM, CPI and TRS (Telangana Rashtra Samithi) today are unanimous about the ubiquitous corruption in his governance and consequent collapse of the administrative machinery.

Excessive reference to Chandrababu Naidu

Both the ruling Congress Government and the *Sakshi* together spend a lot of their time in attacking Chandra Babu Naidu the present opposition leader and the President of TDP in the assembly. The way a number of allegations hurled at him by the ruling Congress as well as the *Sakshi* even as he is out of power suggests that somewhere a fear lurks in the Government's conscience that people may again vote to Chandrababu and he might stage a come back with a bang in 2009.

Allegations such as i. Chandrababu cheated the people of Andhra Pradesh for he had gone back on the promises made by NTR to the people of Andhra Pradesh (1984-89) ii. Chandrababu backstabbed his father in law NTR in order to come to power (1995) iii. Chandrababu too had ill-gotten property worth billions of rupees etc have been in focus for the last four years and have been constant refrain of YSR and his cabinet colleagues both inside and outside assembly. Since the launch of *Sakshi* on March 24, 2008 the paper has so far completely covered all the allegations against him in detail (*April 13-18, 2008*).

Even during the no-confidence motion the Chief Minister launched his tirade against Chandrababu on the above lines instead of replying to the charges of corruption and collapse of state machinery leveled against YSR. (*Eenadu and Sakshi of April 3, 2008*). This was something shocking for the entire state for Chandrababu was already punished by the people of the state in the elections held in May 2004 Today his strength in the Assembly is barely 43.

Secondly Chandrababu's chances of returning to power are subject to many political developments likely to arise in the one year to come.

Noted film actor and mega star Chiranjeevi is toying with the idea of floating a political party and his two mega-brothers and actors Nagababu and Pavan Kalyan are vigorously working towards organizing it at the state level through the net work of Chiranjeevi's fans' associations. Given the mindset of the people, divided across a range of political parties, will Chiranjeevi repeat the same success story of NTR in 1983? It appears that Chiranjeevi wants to launch on clean governance and governance free from corruption. Even Lok Satta President Jayaprakash Narayan wants to penetrate into the electorate on the same plank. But, at this time, are the people of the state very much inspired to have governance free from corruption, is the key question. So far the media did not carry out a single public opinion survey on such a vital issue, though regularly print and electronic media expose a number of scandals. Nor

Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Raipur and Gangtok to cover the states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Chhatisgarh and Sikkim respectively. Appl

[MORE JOBS](#)

POLL

Is Manish Tewari a good choice for the Information and Broadcasting portfolio?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Cannot say

[Vote](#)

[Result](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER



did the media carry out any public response survey to Chiranjeevi's ambitions to launch a political party in this direction.

Thirdly, though many political parties such as CPI (headed by Narayana) CPM (headed by B.N. Raghavulu) Lok Satta (headed by Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan) and TRS (K. Chandrasekhar Rao) are welcoming such a move by Chiranjeevi as it might lead to a third alternative to Congress and TDP in the State, none is certain about the success of Chiranjeevi because most of the people who are welcoming Chiranjeevi into politics were disgruntled or unemployed political activists of Congress, or TDP or CPI or CPM. Further it is doubtful if Chiranjeevi can keep his own large contingent of family members at bay in case of a success. As such whole political landscape in Andhra Pradesh is turning quite clumsy, hazy and placid.

However, as of now, both the electronic and print media reports (*not ETV or Eenadu or Andhra Jyothi*) indicate that Chandrababu's current whirlwind tour of the State entitled *mee kosam (for your sake)* is well received by the people. TV visuals of *TEJA, GEMINI, MAA and ZEE* channels show how crowds were waiting braving the scorching heat for hours together to receive Chandrababu enroute.

Probably it is this massive response to Chandrababu's tour that is sending the wave of fear down the spines among the Congress leaders. Towards neutralizing the possible chances of Chandrababu's return to power *Sakshi* has been launched with a number of politicians who are close to YSR and also privy to the government decisions to effectively indulge in spin doctoring.

In fact the entire media in Andhra Pradesh could have been *non-partisan watchdogs* at this time and generated a heated debate among the people as to *who is who (Agenda setting)*. But unfortunately this is not happening for the obvious reasons of avoiding a witch hunting by YSR. As such *Eenadu* and *Andhra Jyothi* remained on one side and *Sakshi* on the other. Newspapers like *Andhra Prabha* and *Vaaritha* had taken a middle course.

For instance whatever allegations were leveled against Chandrababu, they are applicable to the Congress and Rajasekhara Reddy too. Dr YSR also made many promises including free power and continuous power for 9 hours to all small farmers and all families under below poverty level during his *Praja Prasthanam* in 2004. But just as Chandrababu reneged on the promises of TDP to people such as two rupees a kilo rice, free power to below 50 HP motors, total prohibition, etc., Rajasekhara Reddy also went back on his promises made during his *Praja Prasthanam*. He made so many amendments to his promises as soon as he came to power. If Chandrababu were to be blamed for the revolt of MLAs against NTR in 1995 which brought him the epithet *betrayal and back stabber of NTR*, YSR is not a sacrosanct for that matter. He too betrayed Indira Gandhi during 1977-79 and joined hands with her backstabbers Kasu Brahmananda Reddy and Devaraj Urs. However, media for the best reasons cited above as of now did not conduct a deep study on these issues with public opinion survey *who cheated whom, who is betrayal and backstabber and who amassed ill gotten wealth*.

As for the corruption it was Chandrababu who stunned the assembly during the recent no confidence motion and before by offering an open inquiry into his assets as well as the assets of YSR by a sitting judge of HC or SC. (*Eenadu* April 1-3, 2008). In response to this, the ruling Congress challenged TDP supreme to accept an inquiry into the assets of all the sitting MLAs for which Chandra Babu favourably responded. Irked by Chandrababu's immediate acceptance of the proposal YSR offered another proposal to conduct an inquiry into the assets of all the MLAs since the formation of the State in 1951. Chandrababu even accepted this but YSR and his Speaker cleverly scuttled the issue by saying such a resolution by the Assembly would be bartering the supremacy of legislature to judiciary. On April 3, 2008 the Speaker of Assembly issued a ruling that there is no possibility for such a resolution to conduct inquiry into the assets of MLAs by the sitting judge of HC or SC. This is considered a great slide back of YSR's popular slogan of transparent governance and *Eenadu* published a cartoon in which Chandrababu was seen chasing YSR running with stolen bag of wealth, escaping into crowd. (*Eenadu* April 2, 2008 First page cartoon). YSR took exception to this cartoon and dubbed it as a classic example of Ramoji's vindictive efforts to malign him.

In fact YSR appointed 23 inquiry committees against Chandrababu and his cabinet colleagues but none could as of now establish any corruption on the part of the Ex-CM. During no-confidence motion Chandra babu challenged YSR to come clean on the findings of these 23 inquiry committees constituted against him and his cabinet colleagues. When allegations were hurled at Chandrababu regarding the misuse of funds received from the overseas for NTR Trust, (*Eenadu*, April 2, 2008) Chandrababu offered to place all the records of NTR Trust before the Speaker of the Assembly and dared the Congress government to place all the records pertaining to the ongoing projects in the light of the CAG's (Comptroller and Auditor General of India) findings of massive misappropriation of funds.

Once again media failed to take a public opinion survey whether counter allegations against Chandrababu would absolve the present Chief Minister of the allegations of corruption, casteism and nepotism against his governance.

Except *Eenadu* and *Andhra Jyothi* , no other media had tried to go deep into these aspects of challenges and counter challenges. However electronic media like *TV9 TV5 NTV* conducted elaborate interviews and panel discussions on these issues.

1 2 3

• [Who we are](#) • [Why this Website](#) • [Advertise with us](#) • [Contact us](#) • [Letters](#) • [Archives](#)

Copyright © 2011. [THE HOOT](#). All Rights Reserved.